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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

Subject: "Canning For School Lunches" Information from Office of Marketing Services, War Food Administration

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The results of serving nourishing lunches to children at school have been showing up this winter in better health and improved grades in every State in the Union. And practically every school that carries on a lunch program is so firmly convinced of its value that the teachers, parents and children, too, are willing to do everything they can to continue serving lunches next year.

Any school, you know, that wants to start a lunch program can apply for Federal school lunch funds, and may get as much as 9 cents per lunch, which makes it possible to serve the children well-balanced meals at very low prices. But the citizens in a community must want a school lunch program enough so that they are willing to raise the extra cash or raise the food to make the lunches possible. Remembering the large military orders for commercially canned food, many schools are planning to can their own this summer.

One of the most inexpensive ways to finance a school lunch program if you live where you can grow or buy fresh vegetables is to get together and can them yourselves. Ways and means of canning for school lunches are numerous. And the time to look about your own locality for the best plan to use is right now. If you haven't canned before for your school lunch program, call other women in your neighborhood together and consider the possibilities. You will want to cooperate with the school officials, of course. And perhaps you can get some organized group of women to take the canning on as a club project. Men are interested, too, in helping. At New Lexington, Ohio, over a hundred business and professional men helped to garden and to can thousands of quarts of fruits and vegetables for the school lunches.

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At Fortuna, California, the school teachers and parents with students' help planted the school lawn in a Victory Garden. In addition to raising potatoes, beets and carrots which they stored, they raised many vegetables for canning. With the help of the Home Economics teacher the mothers and older girls put up over 400 quarts of string beans alone. Down in a Louisiana parish canning is done on a larger scale. Over 300 families enjoy the use of the community preservation center for both home and school canning. Every one who cans fruit or vegetables there gives a share to the school. If you haven't considered the possibility of starting a community canning center in your town be sure to look into it, not only from a personal standpoint, but **for** the help it could give to your school lunch program.

An entirely different plan for canning has been successful in the little town of New Bremen, Oklahoma. Some of the women who live on farms were glad to give ~~or~~ fresh vegetables and fruits for the school lunches. Other women in town ~~were~~ were willing to do the canning. So a Parent-Teachers' committee arranged a working schedule for the women to go to the school building once a week, and under the supervision of a Home Economist they canned almost enough fruit and vegetables for the next year's school lunches.

Another source of food for canning is the surplus crops sometimes bought by the War Food Administration in its price support program. Among the schools in the northwest that received peaches bought by the Government last fall was one in Augusta, Montana. From 100 crates the women canned 200 gallons of peaches for the children's lunches in the community cannery. In the northeastern part of the country many schools were glad to get the windblown apples that fell during a hurricane last September. Home Demonstration agents in some places helped to get the necessary equipment for canning the apples in communities that didn't have preservation centers. By looking ahead and by careful planning a group of people can soon fill cupboards with all the nourishing food children will need at noontime -- when winter comes again.

